

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 34

2 46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING LEGISLATION THAT WOULD DEFINE THE POLITICAL STATUS  
12 OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO UNITED STATES CITIZENS OF PUERTO RICO AND  
13 WOULD AUTHORIZE A PLEBISCITE TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR  
14 PUERTO RICANS TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION ABOUT THEIR FUTURE  
15 POLITICAL STATUS.

16  
17 WHEREAS, the Treaty of Paris was signed by the United  
18 States on December 10, 1898 and was ratified on February 6,  
19 1899, formally concluding the Spanish-American War and  
20 establishing Puerto Rico as a territory of the United States;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, on March 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed  
23 the Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act, popularly known as the  
24 Jones Act, which extended United States citizenship to the  
25 residents of Puerto Rico but did not provide them with

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1 representation in the United States congress or give them the  
2 right to vote for the president of the United States; and

3 WHEREAS, since 1917, more than two hundred thousand United  
4 States citizens from Puerto Rico have served valiantly in every  
5 war and armed conflict in which our nation has fought in  
6 defense of American democratic principles and self-  
7 determination; and

8 WHEREAS, four heroic Puerto Ricans, Hector Santiago-Colon,  
9 Euripides Rubio, Carlos James Lozada and Louis Fernando Garcia,  
10 have been awarded the congressional medal of honor for their  
11 valor in defending American democracy and freedoms; and

12 WHEREAS, the territory of New Mexico was also acquired by  
13 the United States as a result of armed conflict, and New  
14 Mexicans endured eighty-four years as a territory before  
15 realizing their aspirations for permanent political status; and

16 WHEREAS, New Mexico's great history, including its  
17 ascension to statehood, is intertwined with our state's  
18 Hispanic heritage; and

19 WHEREAS, in 1997, the legislature of Puerto Rico formally  
20 petitioned the United States congress to respond to the  
21 democratic aspirations of the United States citizens of Puerto  
22 Rico by means of a federally sanctioned plebiscite to be held  
23 no later than 1998, and congress has not yet responded to this  
24 petition; and

25 WHEREAS, as a new millennium begins, the time has come for

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1 Puerto Rico to exercise its right to self-determination  
2 regarding its desire to attain full self-government within the  
3 context of a congressionally authorized plebiscite; and

4 WHEREAS, the New Mexico senate and house of  
5 representatives urge all New Mexicans and citizens of the  
6 United States to support the enactment of a federal law leading  
7 to full self-government for Puerto Rico;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
9 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that congress be requested to enact and the  
10 president be requested to sign legislation that would define  
11 the political status options available to the United States  
12 citizens of Puerto Rico and authorize a plebiscite to provide  
13 an opportunity for Puerto Ricans to make an informed decision  
14 regarding their future political status; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional  
16 delegation be requested to actively promote and support timely  
17 action on this important national issue; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
19 transmitted to the president and vice-president of the United  
20 States, the speaker of the United States house of  
21 representatives, the majority leader of the United States  
22 senate, the chairman of the United States senate energy and  
23 natural resources committee, the chairman of the United States  
24 house of representatives resources committee and the members of  
25 the New Mexico congressional delegation.

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